The Unschooled Prophet

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point

One of the highlights in the life of the Prophet (s) is the fact that he was untrained and unschooled. The scribes of the Prophet, Hudaybiyya, the word 'ummi', and the literacy .of the Prophet

The Unschooled Prophet

point

One of the highlights in the life of the great Prophet Muhammad (SA) is the fact that he was untrained and unschooled (ie, he did not attend any school). He had not been .trained by any teacher and neither he had acquainted himself with any written work

No historian, Muslim or non-Muslim, can be found who would claim that the Prophet (SA) had been taught to read or write by anyone in his childhood or youth, let alone during his old age, which was the time of his mission. No one has ever either indicated .an instance of the Prophet (SA) having read or written a line

The Arabs, particularly those from Hijaz, were generally unlettered during that period, and those of them who could read and write were very well-known and very few in number. It would, as a rule, be impossible for a man to learn this skill under such .conditions and not be well-known for this virtue among the people

As we know, and will be later discussed, at William James Durant remarks: "Evidently no one thought of teaching him (the great Prophet) reading and writing. At that time the

art of reading, and writing was of little significance to the Arabs. For this very reason, there were no more than seventeen persons among the Quraysh tribe who could .read and write

It is not known that Muhammad himself should have written anything. After his appointment as Prophet, he had a special scribe for him. Yet the most popular and eloquent Arabic book was recited by him. He had a better acquaintance and grasp of (the affairs than the educated ones".(١

John Davenport in his book entitled: "Apology for Fault to Muhammad and Qur'an" observes: "As regards education, such as is usual throughout the world, it is the general belief that Muhammad had no education other than that which was (commonly practiced in his tribe".(٢

Constante Vergil Giorgio in his book entitled: "Muhammad - a Prophet to Be Acquainted with Afresh" remarks: "Although he was unschooled, the early verses sent down to him spoke of the pen and knowledge; namely of writing, putting into writing, learning, and of teaching. In no other major religion has knowledge been so extensively appreciated, and no other religion can be found in which such an importance has been attached to knowledge, at its initial stage of development. Had Muhammad been a scholar, no surprise would be caused at the verses having been sent down into the Ghar Hira' (Hira' Cave), since a scholar appreciates knowledge, but the Prophet was neither schooled nor tutored. I congratulate the Muslims on their ,religion having so dearly regarded

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.William James Durant, "History of Civilization (Persian Version)", vol II, p ١۴ -١

John Davenport, "Apology for Fault to Muhammad and Qur'an", ٣rd print, p ١٧ and -٢ .١٨

(at its inception, the acquisition of knowledge".(١

:Gustav Lébon in his famous work: "The Civilization of Islam and the Arabs" notes

It is well-known that the Prophet was unschooled. This stands to reason also by" appealing to inductive generalization, that if he happened to be knowledgeable, the contents and paragraphs of Qur'an would have been better interrelated. Furthermore, if Muhammad was not unschooled, he would not have been capable of propagating a new religion, for an unschooled person is better aware of the needs of the common (illiterate) people and thus is more capable of helping them to the right path. However, whether the Prophet was schooled or unschooled, undoubtedly, he (was possessing the highest degree of intellect, wisdom and awareness".(٢)

Not being conversant with the Qur'anic concepts, materialistically oriented Gustav Lébon fabricates nonsensical words concerning the relationships of Qur'anic verses and the incapability of the educated to understand the needs of the uneducated, thus insults the Qur'an and the Prophet (SA). Yet he admits that there is no recorded evidence or indication concerning the Prophet (SA) having been able to read and .write

I am not intending to seek supportive evidence by quoting the above. The Muslims and the easterners themselves are better qualified to comment on the history of Islam and the east. My purpose in bringing in the above quotations is for letting the readers know that had there been the slightest indication to this effect, it would not .have escaped the inquisitive and critical attention of non-Muslim historians

In the course

١- Constante Vergil Giorgio, "Muhammad - a Prophet to be Acquainted with Afresh", .١st edition, p ۴۵

٢- .Gustav Lébon, "The Civilization of Islam and the Arabs", ۴th edition, p ٢٠

of his journey to Damascus, the great Prophet (SA), accompanied by Abu Talib (AS), stayed at a resting place on his way, during which he had a brief meeting with a monk

(named Buhayra.(1)

This meeting has diverted the attention of the orientalists to this question that the Prophet (SA) might have been taught through this short meeting. When an incident as insignificant as this, attracts the attention of his old and new enemies, had there ever been some record testifying the Holy Prophet's knowledge of reading and writing, it would have not remained hidden from them, but, it would rather have been magnified .several times

For clarification, the point will be discussed in two parts: (1) The Pre-prophetic period; .and (2) The Post-prophetic period

The post-prophetic period, will also be discussed in two parts: (i) Writing; and (ii) Reading

Later on, it will be concluded that it is unanimously agreed upon, by both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars, that before his prophetic mission the Prophet (SA) had not the slightest acquaintance with either reading or writing. However, during the post-prophetic period it is not very certain. During the post-prophetic period what is more certain is that he could not write; however, the fact that he could not read is not so certain. It can be concluded from certain Shi'i accounts that he could read but not write during the post-prophetic period. Although Shi'i accounts are also not unanimous in this respect. What can be inferred from the various pieces of evidence is that he

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Prof Massinion, the known Islamologist and orientalist, in his book: Salmane Pak - ۱ (The Holy Salman) questions even the existence of such a person let alone his meeting with the Prophet (SA) and regards him as a fictitious character. He observes: "Buhayri Sergius, Tamimdari and others who have collected traditions concerning the ."Prophet are ghosts of a doubtful and intangible nature

.neither read nor wrote during the post-prophetic period also

In order to study the pre-prophetic period, we need to discuss the general conditions which prevailed in, what is now, Saudi Arabia during that period from the viewpoints .of reading and writing

It is inferred from historical accounts that those who could read and write at the .advent of Islam were very few in number

The Development Of Calligraphy In Hijaz

In the end of the book: "Futuh al-Buldan", Al-Baladhuri thus describes the early development of calligraphy in Hijaz: "First there were three men of the tribe `Tay' (in the vicinity of Syria) who initiated the Arabic handwriting and compared the Arabic alphabets to the Syriac ones. Later, some men from Anbar learned the alphabets .from these men

The inhabitants of Hirah learned the handwriting from the inhabitants of Anbar. Bushr ibn `Abd al-Malik al-Kindi, brother of Al-Ukaydir ibn `Abd al-Malik al-Kindi, ruler of Dumat al-Jandal, who was a Christian, learned the Arabic handwriting in the course of .his trips to and from Hirah

This same Bushr went on a business trip to Makkah, where he was seen writing by Sufyan ibn Umayyah (Abu Sufyan's paternal uncle) and Abu Qays ibn `Abd Munaf Ibn Zuhrah. They asked him to teach them writing and he did so. Later, this very Bushr, accompanied by the other two, made a Business trip to Ta'if, where Ghaylan ibn Salamah al-Thaqafi learned the writing from them. Subsequently, Bushr parted from the other two for a trip to Egypt. `Amr ibn Zurarah, who later became

known as" `Amr - the Scribe", learned writing from Bushr who then went to ".Damascus where many learned the writing from him

In his book entitled: "Al-Fihrist", under the first part of the initial paper,(۱) Ibn al-Nadim makes reference to certain quotations of Al-Baladhuri. Ibn al-Nadim, quoting Ibn 'Abbas, notes that the first people to write in the Arabic script were three men

from the tribe of "Bulan" in Anbar. Inhabitants of Anbar learned to write from the .inhabitants of Hirah

Ibn Khaldun too, in his introductory chapter: "Fi Annal-Khatta wa al-Kitabah min `Idad (al-Sana'i ` al-Insaniyyah", refers to and confirms Al-Baladhuri's words.(۲)

By quoting authentic narrations, Al-Baladhuri narrates that at the advent of Islam :there were only a few literate persons. He says

At the advent of Islam there were only seventeen men who could write, namely:" `Umar ibn al-Khattab, `Ali ibn Abi Talib (AS), `Uthman ibn `Affan, Abu `Ubaydah al-Jarrah, Talhah, Yazid ibn Abi Sufyan, Abu Hudhayfah ibn Rabi'ah, Hatib ibn al-`Amiri, Abu Salamah al-Makhzumi, Aban ibn Sa'id al-'Umawi, Khalid ibn Said al-Umawi, `Abdullah ibn Sa'd ibn Abi Sarh, Huwaytib ibn `Abd al-`Uzza, Abu Sufyan ibn Harb, Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan, Juhaym ibn al-Salt, and `Ala' ibn al-Hadirami who was not ".from the Quraysh but rather an ally of the Quraysh

Al-Baladhuri names only one Quraysh lady, Shifa', the daughter of `Abdullah `Adawi, who could read and write in the Age of Ignorance concurrent with the advent of .Islam. Later, she professed Islam and was regarded as one of the early emigrants

Al-Baladhuri

p: ۶

.Ibn al-Nadim, Al-Fihrist, published by the Al-Istiqamah Press, Cairo, p ۱۳ -۱

.Ibn Khaldun, Al-Muqaddamah (Introduction), Ibrahim Hilm'i Press, p ۴۹۲ -۲

:,observes

This lady is one and the same person who taught Hafsah, the wife of the Prophet" (SA), to write. One day, the Prophet (SA) said to Shifa': `It will be a good thing if you ".'teach Hafsah `Ruqyat al-Namlah,(۱) as you taught her writing

Then, naming some Muslim women who could both read or write, or both, Al-

:Baladhuri reports

Hafsah, the wife of the Prophet (SA), could write, so could Umm Kulthum, the" daughter of `Uqbah ibn Abi Muit (one of the women who emigrated early). `A'ishah, daughter of Sa'd said that her father taught her to write. Karimah, daughter of Miqdad, could also write. `A'ishah (the wife of the Prophet) could read but not write, ".and Umm Salamah stood in a similar condition

Continuing to mention the names of men who served as scribes for the Prophet (SA), Al-Baladhuri reports that at a time concurrent with the advent of Islam, there were only eleven men -whose names he mentions - from the two tribes Al-Aws and Al-.Khazraj stationed in Madinah, who knew the art of writing

It becomes clear that the art of writing had only recently been introduced into Hijaz, and that the circumstances were then such that, if anyone happened to know reading or writing, he would be known far and wide. Those in Makkah or in Madinah, who knew this art, at a time concurrent with the advent of Islam, were well-known, and very few in number. For this reason they had their names registered in history. If the Prophet

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In the book: Futuh al-Buldan, printed at Al-Sa'adah Press, Egypt, ١٩٥٩, this word has -١ been entered as 'Ruqnat al-Namlah', which is certainly a misprint. The correct term, as recorded 'Naml' in Ibn al-Athir's Al-Nihayah is "Ruqyat al-Namlah"'. "Ruqyah" were sentences of the incantation type which were recited and believed to be effective in warding off evil, or diseases. As regards "Ruqa", Ibn al-Athir reports that certain accounts of the Prophet (SA) recommend and others prohibit the use of "Ruqa" Ibn al-Athir, himself claims accounts of the prohibitive type concern" seeking refuge in other than Allah's name, that man should shift his dependence on Allah and rely upon things other than seeking refuge in the name of Allah", accounts of the recommending type concern the fact that man should depend on divine names and seek His (Allah's) help. As regards 'Naml', Ibn al-Athir reports: "What is known as 'Ruqyat al-Namlah' was not

in reality of Ruqa like nature, rather they were well-known sentences which everyone knew would neither harm nor benefit. The Prophet (SA) addressed Shifa' in a jocular language with these words as a gesture to his wife Hafsah. The words were: "The bride sits hennaed with dark-dyed eyelids in the centre of the crowd, doing everything except disobeying her husband." Such sentences were referred to as "Ruqyat al-Namlah". Apparently, in so saying, a kind of joke and satire has been employed. Ibn al-Athir maintains: "The great Prophet (SA) addressed Shifa' in jocular and satirical language, saying that it would be a good thing if she taught Hafsah "Ruqyat al-Namlah" as she had taught her writing , a. suggestion that Hafsah disobeyed the .(Prophet (SA) by disclosing the secret told her by the Prophet (SA

SA) had been among them he would have been regarded likewise. Since there has) been no mention of the Prophet among the above, it becomes clear that he had .nothing to do with either reading or writing

(The Prophetic Period (In Particular, The Madinah Period

It can be inferred from the evidence available that the Holy Prophet (SA) neither read nor wrote in the period of his prophethood. However, Shi'i and Sunni scholars have different opinions on this matter. Some have considered improbability of this issue as they say: "How is it possible that the wahy (revelation), which used to teach (everything, has not taught him to read and write?(١

It has been mentioned in several Shi'i narrations that the Prophet (SA) could read in (the period of prophethood but could not write.'(٢

One of these narrations is in Saduq's book: `Ilal al-Shara'i`. It reads: "One of Allah's gifts to His Prophet was that he read but did not write. The time when Abu Sufyan headed for 'Uhud, Al-`Abbas, the Prophet's uncle, wrote a letter to him. He received the letter when he was in one of the gardens near Madinah. He read the letter but did not make his Companions aware of its contents. He ordered them to go to the city and (there he let them know about that.""(٣

:This story is different in Zayni Dahlan's book: "Sirah". It relates

As soon as the Prophet received Al-`Abbas's letter, he opened its seal and handed it" over to Ubay ibn Ka'b to read. Ka'b read it, and the Prophet ordered him

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.Bihar al-Anwar, new print, vol. ١۶, p ١٣۴ -١

.Ibid , p ١٣٢ -٢

.Ibid , p ١٣٣ -٣

not to spread out the news. Then, the Prophet went to Sa'd ibn al-Rabi`, the famous companion, informed him of the contents of the letter and asked him too, not to (reveal it. "(١

Some others believed that the Prophet (SA) could both read and write in the period of prophethood. Sayyid Murtada - as is mentioned in Bihar al-Anwar - states: "A group of scholars hold the belief that the Holy Prophet did not die until he was able to read and (write."(٢

Sayyid Murtada himself relies on the well-known tradition: `ink and pen' and says: "That the Prophet asked (those close to him) for ink and pen to write instructions lest they might go astray after his death, has been transmitted through reliable narrations (and histories. "(٣

It is however inappropriate to rely on this tradition, for it does not openly indicate that the Holy Prophet (SA) intended to write with his own hand. Even if we assume that he intended to have someone write, in the presence of the people, and thus have them as witnesses, using the statement: "I want to write something for you lest you should go astray" is quite acceptable. In literature, this is called `metaphorical attribution'. It is one of the signs of eloquence and is used widely in Arabic as well as other .languages

The Scribes of The Prophet

It follows from the texts of authentic ancient Islamic history that the Prophet (SA) had ,a number of scribes in Madinah. The scribes wrote the wahy, the Prophet's words

.Zayni Dahlan, Sirah, vol ۲, p ۲۴ -۱

.Biharal-Anwar, new print, vol ۱۶, p ۱۳۵ -۲

.Ibid -۳

public contracts and transactions, the Prophet's agreements signed with pagans and with Ahl al-Kitab (the followers of the religions recognized by Islam to have existed earlier as true divine religions), the ledgers for sadaqat (charities) and taxes, the ledgers for war-spoils and for akhmas (plural of khums, an Islamic levy at the rate of one-fifth of one's savings and other items), and the numerous letters from the .Prophet (SA) to various places

In addition to the divine revelations and the Prophet's speeches, recorded, and remaining to this day, the agreements signed by the Prophet (SA) and most of the letters from the Prophet (SA) have been recorded in history. In his book: "Al-Tabaqat al-Kubra", Muhammad Ibn Sa'd quotes about one hundred letters, most of which he .(quotes in texts, from the Prophet (SA

Some of these letters, addressed to the sultans and rulers throughout the world, to the chiefs of tribes, to the puppet Roman or Iranian rulers of the Persian Gulf, and to other persons, are invitations to accept the faith of Islam. Some other letters consist of circulars and procedures, which comprise fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence). Other letters serve different purposes. A good many of such letters expose their writers, as the scribes indicated their names at the bottom of the letters. It is said that the one who initiated the traditional practice of having the scribe's name entered at the bottom of .(a letter was Ubay ibn Ka'b, a known companion of the Prophet (SA

None of these letters, agreements or

books has ever been written in the Prophet's handwriting; that is to say, nowhere has it been reported that the Prophet wrote by his own hand. More important still, is the

fact that there is no observed instance to indicate that the Prophet had written down a single verse of the Qur'an. At a time when each and every scribe of the wahy, wrote in the very Qur'anic style, would it be possible that the Prophet (SA) should write, but not in the Qur'anic style, or that he would not write a surah (chapter), or at least a ?verse, of the Qur'an

In the books of history the names of the Prophet's scribes have been recorded. Al-:Ya'qubi, in volume ۲ of his historical work, reports

The Prophet's scribes, who wrote the wahy, letters, and agreements are `Ali ibn Abi" Talib, `Uthman ibn `Affan, `Amr ibn Al-`As, Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan, Shurahbil ibn Hasanah, `Abdullah ibn Sa'd ibn Abi Sarh, Al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah, Ma'adh ibn Jabal, Zayd ibn Thabit, Hanzalah ibn Al-Rabi`, Ubay ibn Ka'b, Juhaym ibn Al-Salt, Husayn Al-(Numayri."(۱

In `Al-Tanbih wal-Ishraf", Al-Mas'udi describes in some detail, the nature of the task undertaken by the scribes, and indicates that they had a more developed sort of activity coupled with a kind of order, organization and work allocation among .themselves

:He reports

Khalid ibn Said ibn Al-`As was at the Prophet's service. He recorded the various" needs which came up, and so did Al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah and Husayn ibn Al-Numayr. '`Abdullah ibn Arqam and Al-`Ala

.Al-Ya'qubi, Tarikh al-Ya'qubi vol ۲, p ۶۹ -۱

ibn `Uqbah recorded documents, contracts and transactions for the public. Al-Zubayr .ibn Al-`Awwam and Juhaym ibn al-Salt wrote down taxes and sadaqat

Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yaman was in-charge of entering the receipts (hirazah) of Hijaz, Mu'ayib ibn Abi Fatimah Dusi recorded war-spoils. Zayd ibn Thabit al-Ansari wrote

letters to rulers and kings whilst serving as a translator to the Prophet. He translated Persian, Roman, Coptic and Ethiopian languages, all of which he had learned from those who knew these languages, in Madinah. (١)Hanzalah ibn Al-Rabi` was a relief recorder who would take over the function of any one of the above-mentioned people ."(who failed to attend. He had come to be known as: "Hanzalah al-Katib (the writer

During `Umar's Khilafah when Muslims had earned victories, Hanzalah went to "Raha", where he died. `Abdullah ibn Sa'd ibn Abi Sarh served as a scribe for a time, but later he lost faith and joined the pagans. Shurahbil ibn Hasanah Tabikhi also wrote for the Prophet and Aban ibn Sa'id and Al-`Ala' ibn Al-Hadrami also occasionally wrote for the Prophet. Mu'awiyah too wrote for the Prophet but only for a few months until the Prophet's death. These were the people who served as official scribes to the Prophet. However, we will not mention the names of those who have written a letter (or two and who are not named among the Prophet's scribes." (٢

In this connection, Al-Mas'udi has made no mention of the "Book of Revelations" nor of the scribes of official documents; among

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In the book: Jami' al-Tirmidhi Al-Tirmidhi narrates from Zayd ibn Thabit that he - ١ said: "The Holy Prophet (SA) of Islam commanded me to learn the Syriac language. Also Al-Tirmidhi narrates in Jami' al-Tirmidhi from Zayd ibn Thabit that he said: "The Holy Prophet (SA) of Islam commanded me to learn the language of the Jews and said: "I swear by Allah that I cannot trust the Jews for my letters." I learned for about one-half of a month. After that whenever he (the Holy Prophet (SA) of Islam) wanted to write a letter to the Jews, I wrote it and whenever he received a letter from the Jews, I read it for him." In Futuhal-Buldan Al-Baladhuri, says on p. ۴۶۰: "Zayd ibn Thabit said: 'The Holy Prophet (SA) of Islam commanded me to learn the Book of the Jews (in the Syriac language). Zayd ibn Thabit also said that the Prophet (SA) told me 'I am worried about my Book because of the Jews.' Scarcely had one-half of a month or a year passed that I learned it. From then on, I wrote his letters to the Jews and also ".read to him (to the Holy Prophet (SA) of Islam) the letters the Jews wrote to him

.Al-Mas'udi, Al-Tanbih wal-Ishraf, p ۲۴۵-۲۴۶ -۲

them `Ali (AS), `Abdullah ibn Mas'ud and Ubay ibn Ka'b, etc. He seems to have meant .naming those who held a title other than that of recording the wahy

In the histories and ahadith of Islam, we come across a good many stories of the visiting enthusiasts from far and wide who sought, the Prophet's advice and to hear his preaching, the Prophet (SA) would respond with wise and meaningful words, .recorded either concurrently or subsequently

Here too, we find no instance of the Prophet (SA) himself writing a single word in response to the visiting enthusiasts. Obviously enough, if only one line written by the Prophet (SA) could have been found, it would have been preserved by the Muslims as a blessing and great honour for themselves and their families. Yet, in the case of Hadrat Amir al-Mu'minin, 'Ali (AS) and the other Imams (AS), we see many instances, where part of their manuscripts have been preserved in their own, or in their Shi`ah (friends) families. Nowadays, there are copies of the Qur'an, which had been written .by these great personalities

The story's widely known of Zayd ibn `Ali ibn Al-Husayn (AS), and that how they .preserved "Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyyah", is a proof of this proposition

Relating an interesting story in the first part of the second chapter, of his book: "Al-:Fihrist" Ibn al-Nadim relates

I became acquainted with a Shi'ah of Kufah whose name was Muhammad ibn Al-" .Husayn nicknamed Ibn Abi Ba'rah. He owned a library the like of which I had not seen

p: ۱۳

He had taken over a library from a Shi'ah of Kufah. The strange thing was the fact that each book or each sheet of the book indicated the name of its scribe. A host of scholars had verified in writing the scribe's name. At that library were kept manuscripts of the two Imams, viz, Imam Al-Hasan ibn `Ali (AS) and Al-Husayn ibn 'Ali (AS). Also kept at the same place were documents and agreements written by `Ali

((AS) and by other scribes of the Prophet (SA)."' (١)

It is true, that they have thus taken care of the blessed works. How could it be true therefore, that the Prophet (SA) should have written one line and that that very line should fail to remain, keeping in view the unbelievable regard which Muslims had for ?the protection of works, sacred ones in particular

By analyzing the available evidence the question of the Prophet (SA) having written, (even during the period of his prophethood) is out of the question, even if there is a little evidence to indicate that he could read at this time. Rather, the greater portion of .the available evidence testifies to his having not read, even in this period

The Event Of Hudaybiyyah

In the life-history of the Prophet (SA), there are events which bring to light the fact that even while in Madinah, the Prophet (SA) did not read or write. Among all such events, the event of Hudaybiyyah is the best known, for it is of particular historical significance. Historical accounts

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.Ibn al-Nadim, Al-Fihrist, Al-'Istiqamah Press, Cairo, p ۶٧ -١

.and ahadith, while in conflict, help to some extent, to explain the question

In the month of Dhu al-Qa'dah, the sixth year after Hijrah, the Prophet (SA) left Madinah for Makkah to perform `Umrah and Hajj. He ordered that the camels for sacrifice be marked and be led along. However, as soon as they arrived at Hudaybiyyah, about two farsakhs (about ١٢ km) from Makkah, the Quraysh took sides to prevent the entry of the Muslims; this, although it was in the forbidden month, when in accordance with the law of Jahiliyyah (period of pre-Islamic ignorance in .Arabia), even the Quraysh did not have the right to deny them admittance

The Prophet (SA) explained that he did not mean to do anything other than to make a pilgrimage to the Ka'bah and that he meant to return home after completing his pilgrimage. The Quraysh disagreed. The Muslims demanded leave to enter Makkah by force, but he refused in order not to show disrespect for the Ka'bah. The Quraysh and the Muslims, finally agreed to sign a peace treaty. The Prophet (SA) dictated the peace treaty to `Ali (AS) who wrote it down. The Prophet (SA) ordered him to write: "In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful." Suhayl ibn `Amr, representing the Quraysh, protested and said: "This is your slogan, with which we are not familiar. "!Write: `In your name, O Allah

The Prophet (SA) agreed and ordered `Ali (SA) to write accordingly. Then, the Prophet (SA) ordered him to

write: "This is a contract being concluded between Muhammad, Allah's messenger and the Quraysh". The representative for the Quraysh objected saying: "We do not regard you as Allah's messenger." Only your followers regard you likewise. If we had regarded you as Allah's messenger, we would not have fought against you, nor had barred your entry to Makkah. Write your and your father's name". The Prophet (SA) ."said: "Whether or not you regard me as Allah's messenger, I am Allah's messenger

Then, he ordered `Ali (AS) to write: "This is a treaty being concluded between Muhammad ibn `Abdillah and the people of Quraysh". It was at this point that the Muslims became angry. From this point on, the historical accounts differ in certain .respects

From Ibn Hisham's "Sirat Ibn Hisham" and also from Sahih Al-Bukhari(۱) (Bab Shurut fi al- Jihad wal-Musalahah ma'a Ahl al-Harb), it can be concluded that this objection was made before the words "Allah's messenger" were written, where-upon the Prophet (SA) agreed immediately to have "Muhammad ibn `Abdillah" written for "Muhammad, the Allah's messenger". Yet, it can be concluded from most accounts that the objection was made at a time when `Ali (AS) had already written the words. The Prophet (SA) then requested `Ali (AS) to erase the words, whereupon `Ali (AS)

.requested to be excused from doing so

Here, again the texts differ. The Shi'ah ahadith's texts agree that upon `Ali's (AS) expressed refusal to erase the sacred words, the Prophet (SA) himself erased the words, in place of

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.Sahih al-Bukhari, vol ۳, p ۲۴۲ -۱

which `Ali (AS) wrote "Muhammad ibn `Abdillah ". In these texts and in certain Ahl al-Sunnah ahadith's texts, there is an explicit reference to the fact that the Prophet (SA) requested `Ali (AS) to show him the words by placing his hand on the words so that he .might erase the words with his own hands

Ali (AS) did so and the Prophet (SA) erased the words "Allah's messenger" with his` own hand. Then, `Ali (AS) wrote "ibn `Abdillah", instead. Therefore, it was `Ali (AS) who did the writing and not the Prophet (SA). Rather, in accordance with both Shi'i .accounts, and those of the Ahl al-Sunnah the Prophet (SA) neither read nor wrote

In the book entitled: "The Stories of the Qur'an", written in Persian in the ۵th Centurv (Hijrah) by Abu Bakr `Atiqi Nayshapuri who adapted the work from his own exegesis of the Qur'an, the author relates the Hudaybiyyah event up to the point where Suhayl ibn `Amr, on behalf of the Quraysh, objected to the words "Allah's messenger". Suhayl ibn `Amr said "The Prophet said to `Ali to erase "Allah's messenger". `Ali disinclined to do this and felt uneasy at the Prophet's insistence. Then the Prophet said to `Ali; "Put my finger on the words so that I may erase them". Since Allah's messenger was untaught, and did not know how to write, `Ali placed the Prophet's .finger on the words and the Prophet erased the words as Suhayl ibn `Amr meant

Al-Ya'qubi too, in his book: `Tarikh

al-Ya'qubi" writes: "The Prophet ordered `Ali to write "ibn `Abdillah" in place of

."'Allah's messenger"

:Having written "`Ali refused to erase the words", in "Sahih Muslim", Muslim writes

The Prophet said to `Ali to show him the words. `Ali did likewise whereupon the" Prophet erased the words and wrote Muhammad ibn `Abdillah".(۱)

In this statement, on the one hand, Muslim writes: "The Prophet sought `Ali's help to erase the words", and on the other hand, he writes: "The Prophet erased the words and wrote". It might appear that the Prophet wrote after erasing the words, but the writer of the statement means that `Ali did the writing, for the text of the statement .reads that the Prophet sought `Ali's help to erase the words

It follows explicitly from "Tarikh al-Tabari" and "Kamil Ibn al-Athir" and Al-Bukhari's account under the chapter: "Al-Shurut" that the second word was written by the Prophet (SA) himself. It is on record that "The Prophet (SA) took the pen from `Ali's hand and wrote himself." In Al-Tabari's and Ibn al-Athir's statements, there is an additional sentence: "Allah's messenger took the pen from `All's hand and while it was ".not proper for him to write, he wrote

Al-Tabari's and Ibn al-Athir's accounts confirm that the Prophet (SA) would not write, but that he did write exceptionally in Hudaybiyyah. This may confirm the view of those who observe that under divine instructions he could have written had he so wished; he never composed a poem nor recited anyone else's. If he ever wished

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.Muslim, Sahih al-Muslim, vol ۵, p ۱۷۴ -۱

to recite a couplet, he would utter it in prose form, disordering and adjusting the :words to achieve this end; for Allah (SWT) would deem poetry below his dignity

And We have not taught him poetry, nor is it suitable for him; it is nothing but a` " .(reminder and a plain Qur'an (۳۶:۶۹

As is seen, the accounts on the Hudaybiyyah event do not tally. However, despite the fact that it can be concluded from certain accounts that the words" ibn `Abdillah" - an integral part of the Prophet's signature - would have been written by the Prophet (SA), .these very accounts also confirm that this was exceptional

In the book entitled: "Usud al-Ghabah", under the details regarding Tamim ibn Jarashah al-Thaqafi the author quotes a story about him, which suggests that even in :the course of his prophethood, the Prophet (SA) neither read nor wrote. He narrates

I, along with a group of people from Thaqif, met the Prophet and embraced Islam." We requested him to sign an agreement with us and agree to our terms. The Prophet ordered us to write whatever we desired and then bring it to him to see. We requested for permission to practice usury and adultery. As we were unable to put it into writing, we visited `Ali ibn Abi Talib for the purpose. Seeing that we had such terms to include, `Ali refused to write. We made the request to Khalid ibn Said ibn Al-.`As

Ali enquired from Khalid whether or not he knew`

what he had been requested to do. Khalid replied: "It does not concern me what it is. I will write whatever they will tell me: Once the writing is brought to the Prophet's attention, he will know what to do therewith". Khalid wrote the matter down and we .took it to the Prophet who ordered someone to read it

The reader had scarcely uttered the word "usury", the Prophet asked him to place his finger on the word which he erased with his own hand and recited from the Qur'an: "O believers! Practice taqwa (fear Allah) and give up usury." On hearing this verse we were imbibed with refreshed faith and assurance whereupon we resigned not to take usury. The reader continued reading till he uttered adultery whereupon again, the Prophet having had his hand placed on the word recited from the Qur'an: "Do not (indulge in adultery, for surely it is an open indecency".(١

A Strange Claim

It is a strange fact that in accordance with what a number of Iranian periodicals and publications(۲) recorded for years ago, Dr Sayyid `Abd al-Latif - an Indian Muslim scholar from Hyderabad, India, the President of the Institute of Indian and Middle Eastern Cultural Studies, and President of the Academy for Islamic Studies at Hyderabad -delivered a detailed lecture on this issue in an Islamic conference in India. In this lecture, published in English, he claimed that the Prophet (SA) read and .wrote even before his period of prophethood

Publication of Dr Sayyid `Abd al-Latif's

.Usud al-Ghabah, vol ۱, p ۲۱۶` -۱

Rawshanfikr", issue no ۸ and ۱۵, October ۱۹۶۵ and the Publication of the Society of" -۲ the Headclerks. November ۱۹۶۵ (copied from the Publication of the Ministry of .(Education and Training, September ۱۹۶۵

speech evoked a peculiar excitement among Iranian readers who then visited the religious authorities and posed questions to them. At that time, I delivered a brief .speech on the issue for the students

Keeping in view the general public's interest in this matter, and the fact that in Dr Sayyid `Abd al-Latif's speech there were facts which were very unexpected from a scholar and researcher of his calibre, I will now quote and discuss his speech. He has :claimed that

The reason for the observation that the Prophet (SA) neither read nor wrote is (۱)" simply the misinterpretation of the word "ummi" meaning "unschooled" or "untaught". This word has been used in verses ۱۵۷ and ۱۵۸ of Surah ۷ "Al-A'raf" of the Holy Qur'an to describe the Prophet (SA) The verse ۱۵۷ reads: "Those who follow the unschooled Messenger Prophet." The verse ۱۵۸ reads: "Therefore believe in Allah and His untaught Prophet". He observes that the interpreters believe that "ummi" means ."untaught", when it does not

In the Qur'an there are other verses which clearly suggest that the Prophet (SA) (٢) .both read and wrote

A number of authentic accounts and historical descriptions have recorded the clear (٣) ".fact that the Prophet (SA) both read and wrote

This is an outline of the claims made by Dr Sayyid `Abd al-Latif. We will in turn, discuss .and analyse these in the next three parts

Is The Belief In An "Unschooled" Prophet Rooted In The Interpretation Of The Word ?""Ummi

point

The claim of Dr Sayyid `Abd al-Latif (who observes that the source of belief in an "unschooled" Prophet (SA) has been

p: ٢١

in the interpretation of the word "ummi"), is unfounded. This is because, firstly, the history of the Arabs and the Makkah at the advent of Islam, is decisive evidence of the .fact that the Prophet (SA) was untaught

Earlier, we have explained that the status of reading and writing in Hijaz at the advent of Islam, was such that the names of all the people familiar with reading and writing were recorded in the history, but no one had listed the Prophet (SA) among such people. Assuming that there was no reference to the question, nor any explanation thereof, Muslims following the unquestionable verdict of history, would have to accept .that their Prophet (SA) was untaught

Secondly, in the Holy Qur'an, there is another verse which is not less explicit than the verses of Surat "al Ar'af containing the word "ummi". On the concept of "ummi" used in the verses of "Surat Al-A'raf", the opinion is divided among the Islamic interpreters of the Qur'an; but on the concept of the following verse which indicates unschooled or :untaught Prophet (SA), there is no difference of opinion

And you did not read before it any book, nor did you write one with your right hand," " .(for then those, who say untrue things, could have doubted (۲۹:۴۸

This verse makes it explicit that the Prophet (SA) neither read nor wrote before his prophethood. Islamic exegetes have generally given a similar interpretation of the verse. But Dr `Abd al-Latif claims that, the very verse has been

p: ۲۲

.misinterpreted

He claims that the word "kitab" used in this verse, has a reference to such sacred books as the Tawrat (Old Testament) and the Injil (Bible). He claims that the verse suggests that until the revelation of the Holy Qur'an, the Prophet (SA) was unfamiliar with any sacred book, for such books were not available in Arabic, and if the Prophet (SA) had read the books available then in a language other than Arabic, he would have .been suspected and accused by the idle talkers

This claim is not true. Contrary to its meaning nowadays widely used in Persian, the word "kitab" in Arabic language has been defined purely as "writing", be it a letter or a book, sacred or otherwise, or be it holy or otherwise. This word has been used in the .Holy Qur'an repeatedly

Occasionally, this word "kitab" has been used (in the Holy Qur'an) to signify a letter sent by one person to another, such as the one concerning the "Queen of Saba": "O Noble Men! I have received a revered letter from Sulayman (Solomon) "; and occasionally it is used in connection with an agreement concluded as a document between the two parties: "Slaves who wish to be freed as per an agreement, accede to their requests to conclude such contracts". At times the term has been used in connection with occult tablets and heavenly truths which tell scientific facts about the (world events: "There is neither any thing green nor dry but (it is all

p: ۲۳

" .(in a clear book ...(۶:۵۹

In the Holy Qur'an, only at places where the word "ahl" has been added to form "ahl .al-kitab", a particular concept is meant

Ahl al-Kitab" signifies "the followers of a heavenly book." In the Surat al-Nisa' of the" Holy Qur'an, verse ۱۵۲ reads: "The followers of the heavenly book shall ask you to send unto them a letter from the heavens. " In this verse, the term has been employed at two places: at one place, in conjunction with the term "ahl" and at another place, it is used alone. Wherever the term "ahl" has been prefixed, it is meant ."''heavenly book" and wherever it is used alone it is meant "letter

In addition, the construction of the sentence: "You did not write with your right hand" suggests: "You did neither read nor write and if you knew how to read and write, you would have been accused of copying from some other source; but since you did not ."know how to read or write, there was no room for such an accusation

However, if the purport is that "You did not read the holy books since they were available in other languages", then, the verse would be under-stood as:. "earlier you neither read nor wrote in other languages", which is not right, for only reading the books in those languages would have well justified the accusation, and also it would not have been necessary for him to have been able to write in those languages. If he

had been able to write in those languages it would have justified the accusation, even though he should have written in his own language. Admittedly, here, there is a point which may confirm Dr `Abd al-Latif's view, even though neither he himself nor any .one of the exegetists has given attention to this point

In this holy verse, the word "tatlu" has been used, a word derived from the root "tilawah" which, as referred to in Raghib's book: "Mufradat Alfaz al-Qur'an", is peculiar to reading the holy verses, and which contrasts with the generic term "Qira'ah" signifying "reading". Therefore, although the word "kitab" is applied commonly to "the holy and other books", the term "tatlu" is peculiar to reading "the .Holy" verses

Evidently, however, the reason that the word "tatlu" has been used here, is that the subject under discussion is the Qur'an. The term has been used in respect of all the texts for reading, ie, as if it should have been said to mean: "Now you read (tilawah) .the Qur'an but you did not read any writing before the revelation of the Qur'an

Another verse indicating the unschooling of the Prophet (SA), is verse ۵۲ of the "Surat :(al-Shura' " (The Counsel

And thus We revealed to you a spirit by Our command. You did not know what a" ".(writing or a faith was ...(۴۲:۵۲

The verse suggests: "You were unfamiliar with the book or a writing until the Qur'an was revealed. "Dr Sayyid `Abd al-Latif has made no mention of

p: ۲۵

this verse. He may observe that the term "kitab" as used in this verse, means "the holy texts", which existed in a language other than Arabic. The answer to this point, .however, is the same as was referred to in the earlier verse

For some reason, not clear to us, Islamic exegetes have maintained that "kitab" particularly refers to the Qur'an. Therefore, the interpretation of this verse is out of .the scope of our logic

Thirdly, the Islamic exegetes been unanimous regarding the meaning of the term "ummi". On the contrary, all the Islamic exegetes and scholars without any exception, have been unanimous on the unschooling of the Prophet (SA) and his non-acquaintance with reading and writing prior to his prophethood. This in itself is a conclusive evidence of the fact that the source of the Muslims' belief in the unschooling of the Prophet (SA) has not been the interpretation of the term "ummi". ."However, we have to discuss about the meaning of the word "ummi

"The Meaning of the word "Ummi

point

." Islamic exegetists have come up with three interpretations of the word "ummi

i) Unschooled and unacquainted with writing)

The majority of exegetes who favour this observation, have said that the word ummi is related to "umm" meaning "mother". The word "ummi" means a person who by birth is familiar with human written works and knowledge; or, it is related to "ummah" ie, who observes the customs of the majority, for the majority of people did not know about writing. Rather, only a few did. Likewise, the word " ummi" means, a man who

p: ۲۶

is like the common people and ignorant.(۱) Some have said that the meaning of "ummah" is "creation", and "ummi" is one who has remained in his original state, ie, the illiteracy. For evidence one should refer to a poem(۲) by Al-A'sha. However, be it either a derivation of "umm" or "ummah" - or whatever meaning of "ummah" is preferred - the meaning of the term ummi is the same, ie, "untaught."

ii) An inhabitant of Umm al-Qura)

Those who favour this view associate the word with "Umm al-Qura", ie, Makkah. The Qur'anic verse ۹۲ of Surat Al-An am refers to Makkah as "Umm al-Qura":

And that you may warn the (inhabitants of) Makkah and those (who live) around it... " .((۶:۹۲

This possibility(۳) has, since ancient times, found its way in the interpretive literature, and is confirmed in a number of Shi'ah ahadith, although these very ahadith have been found to be un-authentic and have been said to be of Israelite origin.(۴) This possibility has, however, been rejected on the basis of certain proofs.(۵)

One reason is that the word "Umm al-Qura" is not a proper noun, and has been applied to Makkah as a common attribute and not as a proper noun of Makkah. The word "Umm al-Qura" signifies the "centre of villages". Any point which serves as a centre of villages is known as "Umm al-Qura". From another Qur'anic verse, ie, verse

۵۹ of the Surat Al-Qasas, it becomes clear that the word carries a descriptive rather :than a nominative function

Your Lord is not like this that"

p: ۲۷

Al-Raghib Al-Isfahani, Mufradat Alfaz al-Qur'an Al-Taqaddum al-'Arabi Press, - ۱ November ۱۹۷۲, under the word "umm" and Exegesis of the Holy Quran : Majma' al-Bayan, under the verse ۷۸ of Surat Al-Baqarah.

." Exegesis of the Holy Qur'an: "Majma' al-Bayan, verse ۷۸ of "Surat Al-Baqarah -۲

Exegesis of the Holy Qur'an: Majma' al-Bayan, under the verse ۷۵ of Surat Ali - ۳ 'Imran and verse ۱۵۷ of Surat Al-A'raf; and Tafsir al-Razi, under the verse ۷۵ of Surat .Al-A'raf

.The Magazine published by the Astani Qudsi Razavi, Mashhad, issue no ۲ -۴

Ibid -۵

He kills the residents of the villages until He sends a prophet to them in the centre of ".the villages, reciting to them Our revelations

It becomes evident that in the Qur'anic language, any point constituting the centre of ."an area(۱) is called its "Umm al-Qura

Moreover, this word "Ummi" used by the Holy Qur'an, has been applied to non-Makkans. Verse ۱۹ of Surat Ali `Imran says:

And say to those who have been given the Book and the unlearned people (non-..." " .(Jewish and non-Christian Arabs): `Do you submit yourselves?' ... (۳:۲۰

It then becomes evident that according to the custom of the time; and also in the language of the Holy Qur'an, all the Arabs who did not follow a heavenly book were ." referred to as "ummiyyin

More important still is the fact that this word "ummi" was applied for the common ' :Jews who were not educated. Verse ۷۸ of Surat Al-Baqarah of the Holy Qur'an reads

Some children of Israil are "ummi"; who do not know their Book except false hopes..."
."((۲:۷۸

It is obvious that the Jews whom the Holy Qur'an refers to as "ummi" were not the inhabitants of Makkah, but rather, most of them were residents of Madinah or of its neighbourhood. Thirdly, if a word is associated with "Umm al-Qura", literary rules require that "qurawi" should be said in place of "ummi", for, according to the lexical rules governing attribution, when modifying the modifier or the modified, particularly ,"when the modifier is "ab=father", "umm=mother", "ibn=son'", or "bint=daughter

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One of the narrations confirms the word "ummi" as a derivative of "Umm al-Qura" -۱ meaning Makkah, although the word "Umm al-Qura" is a common attribute and not a proper noun. The narration states: "The Prophet was known as "Ummi" because he "was an inhabitant of Makkah and Makkah is one of the "Umm al-Quras

it modifies the modified and not the modifier, just as when modifying "Abu Talib", "Abu Hanifah", "Banu Tamim", they are referred to as "Talibi", "Hanafi" and .""Tamimi

iii) Arab polytheists who were not the followers of the Book)

This view has existed among the exegetes of the ancient times. In Majma` al-Bayan, under verse ۲۰ of Surat "Ali-`Imran" of the Holy Qur'an, "ummiyyin"has been placed against "Ahl al-Kitab" This view is described as that of the Companion and great exegete, `Abdullah ibn `Abbas. Under verse ۷۸ of the Surat Al-Baqarah, Abu .`Ubaydah states', a similar view

It follows from what is understood from verse ۷۵ of Surat Ali-`Imran that Al-Tabarsi himself has selected the meaning for the verse. In his book: "Al-Kashshaf", AI-Zamakhshari has provided a similar interpretation of this verse and of verse ۷۵ of the Surat Ali-Imran. Fakhr al-Razi mentions the same possibility under the verse ۷۸ of the .Surat al-Baqarah and verse ۲۰ of the Surat Ali-`Imran

But the fact is that this meaning is not different from the first one. However, it is not correct that a people who do not follow a divine book, be referred to as "ummi" although they may be literate. This term has been applied to Arab polytheists because they were illiterate. What constituted the basis for applying this term to Arab polytheists was their unfamiliarity with reading and writing rather than their not .following a heavenly book

Hence, wherever this word has been used in the plural form and applied to Arab polytheists, this possibility has been mentioned: but wherever it has been used

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in the singular form and applied to the Holy Prophet (SA), no interpreter has said that the significance is that the Prophet (SA) did not follow one of the heavenly book. In this .case, the possibilities are only two at the most

One is that the Prophet (SA) was not familiar with handwriting, and the other was that he was from Makkah. Since, for the conclusive reasons enumerated above, the second possibility is ruled out, definitely the Prophet (SA) was called "ummi" because .he had not been taught, nor did he know how to write

Here, there is a fourth possibility in regard to the meaning of the word: this being that .the word meant unfamiliarity with the texts of holy books

This possibility, is the one that Dr Sayyid `Abd al-Latif has innovated, and that he confused it with the third one that we have mentioned, quoting the ancient exegetes. :The aforementioned person says

The words "ummi" and "ummiyyin" have been used at several places (in the Holy" Qur'an) but they have always been used to mean the same everywhere. Lexicographically the term "ummi" means a "newly-born baby" from a mother's womb. It is with reference to this state of living and life, that the word "ummi" came to imply:" one who can neither read nor write. The word "ummi" also means "a person who lived in "Umm al-Qura". "Umm al-Qura" means "the mother of cities", "capital

city", and "metropolis". This was the attribute the Arabs of the Prophet's (SA) time associated

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." with Makkah. Therefore, whoever was from Makkah was referred to as "ummi

Another area of application of the word "ummi" is to a person who has not been conversant with Semitic texts nor been a follower of Judaism or Christianity which has been referred to as "Ahl al-Kitab" in the Holy Qur'an. In the Holy Qur'an, the word "ummiyyin" was applied to the pre-Islamic Arabs who neither had a holy book nor followed the New Testament and the Old Testament, and that the word was used for ." Ahl al-Kitdab

While there are so many meanings for the word "ummi" it is not known why the exegetes and translators of the Holy Qur'an, Muslim or non-Muslim, have picked up the meaning namely, "a newly-born baby unaware to his environment" and interpreted it as illiterate and ignorant, and as a consequence, have introduced(١) the ."pre-Islam inhabitants of Makkah as "ummiyyin", or "an illiterate people

Firstly, since the earliest days, the Islamic exegetes have interpreted the words "ummi" and "ummiyyin" in three ways, and have come up with at least three possibilities Contrary to Dr Sayyid `Abd al-Latif, Islamic exegetes have not given one .single meaning

Secondly, no one has said that the word "ummi" means a newly-born baby unaware of his surroundings "whose connotation is that a person who can neither read nor write. Basically, this is not applied to a newly-born baby, but rather to an adult who knows as much about the skills of reading and writing as when he is just

p:٣١

١- The publication of the society of the Headclerks, issue of October ١٩٦٥ (copied from the publication of the Ministry of Education and Training, September ١٩٦٥).

newly-born. As referred to by logicians, the word signifies "absence and second nature". Islamic logicians would always mention this word as one of the examples of ."absence and second nature" in books of logic

Thirdly, it is not true to say: "the word is also used to mean a person who has no familiarity with ancient Semitic texts". What can actually be inferred from the sayings of early exegetes and lexicologists is that the plural form of the word (ummiyyin) has been used for the Arab polytheists who were generally illiterate, as compared with the "people of the book". The polytheists were perhaps given this humiliating title by .the Jews and the Christians

On the whole, it is illogical to call a people "ummi" who can read and write in their own language, just on the basis of unfamiliarity with a certain book or language. The root of the word is "umm" or "ummah" and implies remaining in the same state as when .one is born

But why this word "ummi" has not been recognised as being rooted in "Umm al-Qura", although the possibility has been mentioned consistently, is because of numerous objections which have been mentioned earlier. The Indian scholar's amazement is therefore baseless. It is confirmed by the fact that in some other usages of this word, recorded in books of history and ahadith, there is no other meaning for it except "untaught". In the book: "Bihar al-Anwar", vol ۱۶, p ۱۱۹, it is narrated from the Holy Prophet (SA): "We

are a people who neither read nor write". In vol ۴ of his history book, under the biography of Muhammad ibn `Abd al-Malik, popularly known as Ibn Al-Zayyat, a :minister of Al-Mu'tasim and Al-Mutawakkil, Ibn Khallikan writes

Earlier he was among the secretaries of Al-Mu'tasim, the `Abbassid Caliph, and" Ahmad ibn Shadi Al-Basri was the minister. Once a letter came to Al-Mu'tasim, which the minister read for the Caliph. The word "kala' " was in the letter and Al-Mu'tasim,

who was not a knowledgeable person, asked his minister for its meaning. The minister didn't know the meaning either. The Caliph said: "An untaught Caliph and an ignorant minister". Then he asked for one of the secrataries to come. Ibn Al-Zayyat was present and came for explaining the meaning of the word. He explained through some other words which were closer to the meaning and stated their differences. This ".formed a prelude for him to become the Caliph's minister later on

Here, the Caliph, who spoke the language of the ordinary people, meant "untaught" :when he used the word "ummi". The poet Nizami says as given below

,Wisdom is inferior to the Messenger Ahmad

.The two worlds depend on the existence of Muhammad

,He is unschooled but stating in the most fluent way

.The inclusive knowledge from Adam to Jesus, I say

,In the keeping of a promise he is perfectly steadfast

.Ahead of all prophets he was though among them he was the last

?Is It Inferred From The Qur'an That The Prophet Used To Read And Write

According to Dr Sayyid `Abd al-Latif, it can explicitly be understood from some

of the Qur'anic verses that the Prophet (SA) could both read and write: In Surat Ali-`Imran, verse ۱۶۴, we read :

Truly Allah conferred a benefit upon the believers when He raised among them a" Messenger from among themselves, reciting to them His communications and purifying them, and teaching them the Book and the Wisdom, although before that " .(they were in manifest error (۳:۱۶۴

:Dr. `Abd al-Latif says

As the Holy Qur'an clearly states, the foremost duty of the Prophet (SA) was teaching" the Qur'an to his followers, and it is certain that the minimum capability required for the one who wants to teach the contents of a book to others is, again as the Qur'an states explicitly, being able to make use of the pen or, at least, being able to read ".what has been written by the pen

This reasoning seems queer, as, firstly, what all Muslims unanimously believe in, and he desires to prove the vice versa, is that the Holy Prophet (SA) neither could write nor read before the appointment to prophethood. Such a reasoning at the most can prove that the Holy Prophet (SA) was able to read and write during the period of his .prophethood. This is agreed by Sayyid Murtada, Sha'bi and some other people

Secondly, even as regards the period of prophethood, Dr `Abd al-Latif's reasoning is ineffective; for example, pen, paper, blackboard, drawing, etc, are required when a teacher is to teach reading and writing or to teach mathematics for which he has to solve himself

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so that the students may learn. However, there is no need for such tools for prophets .who teach metaphysics, ethics and halal and haram matters

Among Mashsha'in philosophers (peripatetic philosophers) were called so because they used to walk when teaching, and the learners had to take notes in order not to forget the matters taught. The Holy Prophet (SA) too frequently advised his followers to write down his sayings. He used to say: "Record the knowledge", and when he was :asked, "how?", he answered, "By writing down".(۱) He also said

May Allah grant happiness to the servant who hears what I say, records it (in his" (mind) and conveys it to the one who has not heard me saying that."(۲

It is in the traditions that the Messenger of Allah twice announced this statement, "O God bless my successors". "Who are your successors?", he was asked, and he replied, "They are those who come after me, who learn my sayings and traditions and teach

(them to others."(۳

He also said: "Among the rights of a child on his father is to choose him a good name, (teach him writing and choose him a spouse when matured."(۴

:The Holy Qur'an states explicitly

O believers! whenever you contract a debt with one another for a fixed time, then" ".(write it down; and let a scribe write it down between you with equity ...(۲:۲۸۲

Thus, based on the commands of Allah (SWT) and His Prophet (SA), Muslims were bound to acquire the noble art of reading

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.Bihar al-Anwar, new impression, vol ۲, p ۱۵۱ -۱

.Al-Kafi, vol ۱, p ۴۰۳ -۲

Bihar al-Anwar, vol ۲, p ۱۴۴ -۳

Wasa'il al-Shi'a, vol ۳, p ۱۳۴ -۴

and writing in order to preserve their religious heritage; to fulfil their duties towards the rights of their children; and to administer well their worldly affairs. This led to the rise of "the pen movement", which stimulated the people among whom the literate were only a few, to seek knowledge and to acquire the skills of reading and writing with such an enthusiasm that some of them learned few languages in Madinah and .could propagate the message of Islam throughout the world in different languages

History tells us that the Holy Prophet (SA) made the captives of the Battle of Badr free on compensation. Some of them were poor, and were freed without paying while some others had the ability to teach writing and each of them were obliged to teach writing to ten children of Madinah, in return for their freedom.(۱) This was the extent to which the Holy Prophet (SA) insisted on the learning of reading and writing and on the acquiring of knowledge. But this does not necessarily mean that he had to know .and employ these two skills in order to call people to Islam and propagate his religion

:Dr `Abd al-Latif says

In the first surah of the Holy Qur'an, Allah makes mention of `pen' and `writing'. Isn't" this the explicit mentioning of a proof that the Prophet of Islam knew reading and writing and that he made use of them? How was it possible that the Holy Prophet encouraged people seek knowledge and become literate, whilst he

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Husayn Al-Diyar Bakri, Tarikh al-Khami", vol ۱, p ۳۹۵; and "Al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah", -۱ vol ۲, p ۲۰۴

himself paid no attention to reading and writing? Although he always had a pioneering ".role in any activity

This is, again, a strange reasoning. The initial verses of the above-mentioned s۶rah indicate, of course, that these were revealed to a servant of Allah (SWT), who was in charge of guiding Allah's other servants, and that the Prophet (SA), who received them at his holy heart, acknowledged the value of reading and writing for men. But these verses never suggest that either Allah (SWT) or the Prophet (SA) dealt with .reading, writing, pen or paper

Dr `Abd al-Latif also says: "The Holy Prophet was the initiator in practising all that he "?himself ordered. How could he then order this without doing it himself

It is, as if to say that a physician who prescribes a medicine for a patient, should first use the medicine himself. Of course, if the physician falls sick and is in need of the .same type of medicine, he will definitely take it just as his patient does

But how about the reverse - when the physician isn't sick and consequently not in need of such a medicine? Here we should see whether the Holy Prophet, like others who were in need of learning the arts of reading and writing in order to attain perfection and to remove their defects, had to acquire these two arts and yet, didn't act upon what he himself ordered, or was he in a state that rendered him

.independent of them

The Holy Prophet

p: ٣٧

was the forerunner in matters of worship, devotion, piety, honesty, truth, good-temperedness, democracy, humility and other good manners. For all of these were counted towards his perfection and the lack of these was a defect. But the issue of so-called ` literacy' doesn't belong to this category.

The unusual value of being literate for human beings is because the literacy helps them benefit from one another's knowledge. Writing is essentially the conventional symbols used by people to express themselves. In fact through the familiarity with writing, knowledge can be transmitted from one person to another, from one tribe to another and from one generation to another.

Thus, man preserves his knowledge from extinction. This is why being literate is considered equal to knowing languages, i.e, the more number of languages the man knows, the more means he has at his disposal to acquire knowledge from others.

Both knowing languages and being literate are keys to the acquisition of knowledge rather than the "knowledge" in its real sense. The knowledge implies that the man comes to know of a fact or a law which enjoys reality in the world of existence.

Natural sciences, logic, and mathematics are considered as knowledge because they serve the man to discover a real, creative and cause effect type of relationship among subjective things. But knowing words, grammar and the like are not in themselves knowledge, for these will not make us aware of true relationship between the objects. Instead, they will help us to know a series of

p: ٣٨

conventional matters which do not go beyond the limit of assumption. Knowing these matters means knowing the keys to knowledge rather than "knowledge" itself.

Of course, a series of real phenomena such as the development of words and compositions, which represent the evolution of thought and take place on the basis of natural laws, appear in the context of such conventional matters; and needless to say that it is a part of philosophy and knowledge to know these natural laws. Consequently, the value of literacy lies in the fact that the man can find the key to .others' knowledge

Now, let's see whether acquiring knowledge is limited to man's getting the key to the knowledge of others and making use of it. Does the Prophet have to make use of the knowledge of mankind? If so, then what happens to genius and initiative and to the direct acquisition of knowledge from nature? It actually happens that the most inferior way of seeking knowledge is through the sayings and writing of others, for not only the seeker's personality does not play its role in this process, but also in man's .writings there can be found illusions and realities interwoven

The famous French philosopher, Descartes, after having published a series of articles, earned a worldwide fame and his sayings gave rise to the amazement and admiration of one and all. One of those who had read Descartes' articles and was astounded by ,them, and whose viewpoint was the same as of Dr Sayyid `Abd al-Latif

thought that Descartes had found a valuable treasure of books and manuscripts and had received all his knowledge and information from these sources. He met Descartes and requested him to show -his library. Descartes directed him to a place where he had dissected the dead body of a calf, and addressed the man: "This is my ."library. I have gained all my knowledge from `these' books

:The late Sayyid Jamal al-Din Asadabadi used to say

It is quite strange that some people spend a long life studying the books and writings" by their fellow-human beings under the light of a lamp, but if they close the books one ".night and study the same lamp, they will acquire much more knowledge

Nobody is born learned, Ali people are ignorant at the beginning and they become learned little by little. In other words, every person, with the exception of Allah (SWT), is ignorant himself but turns out to be knowledgeable by virtue of some other forces, causes and means. Thus, every individual is in need of an instructor - an inspiring force. Allah (SWT) speaks of the Holy Prophet (SA) in this respect in the following :verse

Did He not find you an orphan and give you shelter? Did He not find you unable to see" and show you the way? Did He not find you in need and make you free from need?" ((۹۳: ۶-۸

But, in principle, who and what should the instructor be? Does the man out of necessity have to acquire knowledge from

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another of his fellow beings? If so, then he would essentially have the key to the knowledge of others (ie, "literacy") at his disposal. Is the man not in a position to be the initiator himself? Can he not study the book of nature and creation independent of others? Is the man not in a position commune with the ghayb (invisible) and the kingdom of heaven, and Allah (SWT) directly becomes his instructor and guide? The :(Holy Qur'an clarifies this in respect of the Prophet (SA

Nor does he speak out of desire. This is naught but revelation that is revealed; the" " .(Lord of Mighty Power has taught him (۵۳: ۳-۵

:(Imam `Ali (AS) speaks about the Holy Prophet (SA

Allah (SWT) had appointed His most honourable angel to look after him since his very" childhood. The angel led him to noble ways and manners and the best morals of the (world."(۱

In his outstanding "Al-Muqaddamah (Introduction)", Ibn Khaldun regards the perfection of writing to lie in the fact that man leads a social life, ie, members of human society need the knowledge of one another. He depicts the evolutionary

course of writing in different civilizations and after pointing out the advent of writing in :Hijaz, continues thus

In the early days of Islam, writing enjoyed its initial forms so far as its technical" aspect was concerned, and the ways of writings of Prophet's Companions were undoubtedly defective. However, their followers and successors retained the same ways of writing and regarded them as sacred

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Nahj al-Balaghah" Sermon No ۱۹۰ -۱

and honourable in transcribing the Holy Qur'an, without making any alterations, though some ways were in distinct opposition to the rules of writing. Consequently, ".some of the Qur'anic terms and phrases remained in a specific form of writing

:Ibn Khaldun adds

We should not be mistaken about the difference between perfection in technical and" practical matters, including prescribed forms of writing, which are relative and dependent on means of living, and the absolute perfection, the lack of which creates ".real defects in man's humanity

:He then sets forth the issue of the Prophet's unletteredness and concludes

The Prophet was untaught, and being untaught was an accomplishment for him, for" he had received his knowledge from the heavens. But for us, being untaught means (defect and imperfection, for it indicates our very ignorance."(۱

Other Qur'anic verses to which Dr `Abd al-Latif refers are ۳rd and ۴th verses of Surat al-Bayyinah. He says: "It is quite strange that the translators and commentators of the Holy Qur'an have been heedless of these verses about the Holy Prophet (SA), in :which Allah (SWT) says

Muhammad) a messenger from Allah, reciting pages purified, therein true Books'.)'

We should take into consideration the fact that in these verses it is not mentioned that the Holy Prophet (SA) narrated the holy "suhuf" (ie, pages) by heart. It is rather (stipulated that he read from the texts."(۹۸:۳-۴

The answer to this reasoning will be clear when the meanings of the two words (ie, "Sahifah" and "yatlu") in the above-mentioned verses are understood. The

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.Ibn Khaldun, Al Muqaddamah (Introduction)", Ibrahim Hilmi Press, p ۴۹۴, ۴۹۵ -۱

meaning of the verses is: "The Holy Prophet (SA) reads to the people some purified pages on which there are true and everlasting writings." Now, since the "pages" here means the very sheets on which the Qur'anic verses were recorded, it is obvious that .the Holy Prophet (SA) recited the Holy Qur'an for the people

The word "yatlu" (from the root "tilawah") does not have the sense, "reading from a text" and nowhere has it been so employed. A consideration of various applications of the words "tilawah" and "qira'ah" makes it clear that not every kind of expression can be called "tilawah" or "qira'ah". Rather, these words are employed in cases where the material read is related to a certain text, regardless of being read from memory or .from the text

For instance, reciting the Holy Qur'an is both "tilawah" and "qira'ah" whether it is recited from the text of the Qur'an or from one's memory. There is a difference, of course, between the two, that is, "tilawah" is used when reading a holy text but "qira'ah" can be applied to any reading, holy or unholy sort of written material. As an example, in case of reading Sa'di's "Gulistan" only "qira'ah" can be used, and not ."''tilawah

At any rate, whether one reads from the text or from the memory, it does not :lave anything to do with the concepts of "tilawah" and "qira'ah". Thus, the above-mentioned verses indicate no more than the fact that the Prophet (SA) read to the

people the Qur'anic verses which were recorded on some sheets. And there was essentially no need for the Prophet (SA) to read the verses of the Qur'an from the text while hundreds of Muslims recite them from the memory. Had the Prophet (SA) not memorized the Holy Qur'an? In fact, Allah (SWT) had guaranteed his memory. In Surat Al-'A`la, the Holy Qur'an says:

"We shall make you recite so you shall not forget (۸۷:۶)."

It is thus clear that one cannot conclude from the Qur'anic verses that the Prophet (SA) of Allah (SWT) was able to read and write. Rather, contrary to this fact can be concluded. Even if we conclude on the basis of the Qur'anic verses to that effect, it would be something belonging to the prophetic period, whereas Dr Sayyid `Abd al-Latif's claim is that the Prophet (SA) was able to read and write before his appointment as a prophet.

Historical Facts And Ahadith

Dr Sayyid `Abd al-Latif claims that it is possible to prove, through historical facts and traditions, that the Prophet (SA) used to read and write. He supports this by two facts.

(۱) He states: "Al-Bukhari relates within the narrations and ahadith recorded in the Chapter: "Al-Ilm" (the knowledge that the Prophet (SA) gave 'Ali, his son-in-law, a secret letter and told specifically not to open it, but have the name of the recipient in his mind and hand him over the letter. Who else other than the Prophet could have written the letter while even 'Ali, his son-in-law

and his trusted person did not know its content?(۱)

Unfortunately, the narration in Sahih al-Bukhari does not mention 'Ali's (AS) name as the carrier of the letter, whereas Dr `Abd al-Latif concludes that the Prophet (SA) himself had written the letter, on the basis that he kept its contents a secret even to

:('Ali (AS

In Sahih al-Bukhari, Chapter "Al-Ilm" Al-Bukhari asserts: "The Prophet set off a group of people and handed a letter to their commander and asked him not to open it before ".he arrived at a certain place

He does not say that their commander was 'Ali (AS). The contents of the narration reveal, in addition, that the one to open it should have been the carrier of the letter not a third person, as assumed by Dr `Abd al-Latif. What Al-Bukhari has narrated is really connected with a story called "Batn al-Nakhlah" recorded in books of history .and Prophetic traditions

Both Ibn Hisham's "Sirah "(۲)(under the title: `Abdullah ibn Jahsh's sariyyah) and Bihar al-Anwar (۳) relate the same narration that the carrier of the letter was `Abdullah ibn Jahsh. It is said that the Prophet (SA) asked him to open the letter after two days' journey and do as it instructed, and he did so and acted upon the Messenger of Allah's .command

Al-Waqidi's "Al-Maghazi" states in explicit terms that Ubay ibn Ka'b was the writer of :the letter, not the Holy Prophet (SA). It says

Abdullah ibn Jahsh said: `Once, after the Salat al-Isha' (night prayer), the Prophet" asked me

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Sahih al-Bukhari, vol ۱, p ۲۵ -۱

Ibn Hisham, S'irah, vol ۱, p ۶۰۱ -۲

Bihar al-Anwar, old edition, vol ۶, p ۵۷۵ -۳

to come to him the next morning early, armed and ready, to be sent on a mission. The next day, after the Salat al-Fajr (morning prayer), held in the mosque in congregation under the leadership of the Prophet, I was standing near the Prophet's house armed .and prepared

Some other Companions were present there too like me. The Prophet summoned Ubay ibn Ka'b and ordered him to write a letter. Then, he handed me over the closed letter and said: `You are the commander of these people. Open this letter after two nights of journey on the mentioned path, and act as it instructs.' I did what I had been told after two days and noticed that I had been ordered to go to Batn al-Nakhlah (a place between Makkah and Waif) to obtain necessary information about the .Quraysh's caravan

In addition, I had been advised not to compel any of the men to accompany me in the task. Of course, it was a dangerous mission. I told my friends that whoever is ready for the martyrdom could accompany me, and that the remaining were free to go back. They all unanimously remarked: We all heard and shall obey Allah, His Prophet and you.' (۱)۴۰

.Accordingly, what Dr `Abd al-Latif has based his claim on is totally unfounded

Dr `Abd al-Latif further states: "As narrated by Al-Bukhari and Ibn Hisham..., the (۲) ".Prophet (SA) wrote the treaty by his own hand

Firstly, Al-Bukhari has quoted this in one narration and has related the

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.Muhammad ibn 'Umar al-Waqidi, Al-Maghazi, vol ۱, p ۱۳ -۱

contrary in another. Secondly, Sunni scholars have almost unanimously asserted that although Al-Bukhari's statement apparently indicates that the Prophet (SA) himself has written it, this has not been the intention of the narrator. Al-Halabi's "Sirah", narrates the story in the same manner and even states: "The Holy Prophet asked `All to delete the words: "Allah's Messenger'." but adds, quoting narration of Al-Bukhari, .(that some have taken this as a miracle carried out by the Prophet (SA

It, however, mentions afterward: "Some have said that this narration is not acceptable by some knowledgeable persons. It actually implies that the Prophet

".ordered someone to write and that he did not write it himself

He adds: "Abul-Walid Baji Maliki from Spain, who intended to rely on the apparent meaning of Al-Bukhari's statement was seriously refuted by the Spanish scholars." (۱)۴۱

However, Ibn Hisham's "Sirah" does not include such a statement and it is not clear as why did Dr `Abd al-Latif ascribe this to Ibn Hisham.' We have already mentioned that from the historical point of view, what is inferred from most narrations, is that `Ali (AS) wrote all the written material. That the Prophet (SA) wrote, despite his inability to .write, can only be concluded from Al-Tabari's and Ibn Al-Athir's statements

At the most this can be implied that the Prophet (SA) wrote once or more during the prophetic period, whereas, the issue under discussion concerns the period before his .prophethood

The Adversaries' Accusation

It was mentioned at the very beginning of the book that: "The

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.Al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah, vol ۳, p ۲۴ -۱

opponents of Islam and the Prophet (SA) accused him of borrowing ideas from others (this accusation is reflected from some verses of the Qur'an). But they did not say that he was literate and knew how to read and write and that he perhaps had some books ".which he consulted before presenting his views

Someone might, however, claim that the Prophet (SA) accusation is was accused in :this respect too. This reflected from the Qur'an where it says

They say: The stories of the ancient - he has got them written down - so that these" " .'(are recited to him morning and evening (۲۵: ۵

The answer is that this verse does not explicitly indicate their claim that the Prophet

(SA) used to write, regardless of the fact that the opponents' accusations were so prejudiced and based on complexes and grudges that, as the Holy Qur'an puts it, only terms like "injustice" and "oppression" can best be used for them. At the same time, the Arabic term "iktitab" means both `to write' and "istiktab" ie, to make someone .'write something

Here, the second meaning applies to the verse which would mean "They said: `he has written (or others have written for him) the stories of the ancient, then someone reads to him every morning and evening," "iktitab" is mentioned here in the past .tense and "imla"' in the present continuous

It implies that someone wrote them, and that those who knew how to read, used to come to Prophet (SA) every day

and night and read them to him, and that he learned and memorized them. Thus, if the Prophet (SA) knew how to read, they would not necessarily say that others used to read to him day and night; rather, it would suffice them to say that he himself .referred to writings and memorized them

Therefore, even the oppressive and accusing infidels of his time, who accused the Prophet (SA) in many ways and named him an insane, a sorcerer, a liar and an imitator of others' oral statements, etc, could not claim that he read the contents of other .books to them due to his inability to read and write

Conclusion

It is inferred from what has already been stated that according to the definite testimony of history, Qur'anic proofs and abundant indications deduced from the history of Islam, the Holy Prophet's (SA) mind was untouched by human teaching. He was a man taught only in the divine school and who received his knowledge from Him .alone. He was a flower fostered by the Pre-eternal Gardener and none else

Although Allah (SWT) has nothing to do with the pen, paper, ink, reading and writing,

:He swore by the pen and its manifestations as a sacred matter in His Holy Book

" .(Nun' I swear by the pen and what they write (۶۸:۱"

Allah (SWT) also commanded "reading" in His ,first heavenly message and introduced the knowledge and art of using the pen as the greatest blessing bestowed on man after the blessing

p: ۴۹

:of "creation". The Holy Qur'an states

Read in the name of your Lord Who created. He created man from a clot. Read and" your Lord is Most Honourable; Who taught (to write) with the pen; taught man what " .(he knew not (۹۶:۱-۵

In fact, the one who had not held a pen in his hand, established the "Pen Movement" immediately after his arrival in Madinah by providing simple facilities. Although he had neither been tutored by man nor had he attended any universities or the like, he :turned out to be man's teacher and the founder of universities. Hafiz remarks

,Brightened and made Heaven's grace manifest"

.He healed our wandering heart and our wounded chest

,He, who attended no school, was dear of mine

.Hundreds of tutors were taught with his knowledge, divine

,And his graceful glance filled the lovers with spirits raised

".The knowledge and wisdom both got amazed

Imam 'Ali al-Rida (AS), in his discussion with the people following other religions, addressed Ra's al-Jalut: "Among the true reasons of his prophethood is that the Prophet was an orphan, a poor shepherd and a worker who had not read any books and had not been taught; yet, he brought a book in which there are the stories of

(prophets and the information regarding both past and future generations."(۱)

What reveals more reasonably the loftiness, grandeur and heavenliness of the Holy Qur'an is the fact that this great divine Book, with myriad instructions concerning the creation, the Resurrection, human beings, morality, law, admonitory stories and sermons - with all

۱- `Uyun Akhbar al-Rida, p ۹۴.

its grace, beauty and eloquence - was issued from the tongue of the one who was himself unlettered, who neither attended any school or college nor received any university education and who neither met any of his contemporary scholars nor read a simple book of his time.

The sign and miracle that Allah (SWT) granted to His last Prophet (SA) was the book and writing, of speech and meditation, and of feelings and senses. It deals with wisdom, thoughts, the heart and mind. This Holy Book has shown for centuries, and still shows, its extraordinary spiritual authority. The passage of time cannot make it obsolete.

It has fascinated, and continues to fascinate, millions and millions of hearts. It brims over with a life-sustaining power. What thoughtful minds it has induced to meditation! What numerous hearts it has overflown with spiritual enthusiasm!

What countless nightingales of dawn and those keeping a night vigil it has spiritually fed!

What tears it has caused to flow on cheeks at midnight out of love for Allah (SWT) and fear of Him. And what enslaved and chained nations has it emancipated from the claws of tyranny and despotism.

The poet says:

,As the Qur'an's seal shone all and everywhere"

.The Pope's plans it shattered and of the Magi's here and there

,Let's open what I really feel in essence

.It is not a simple book but has a difference

It transforms into whosoever's soul it enters, Like the transformed soul, the .world .also alters

,It is clear like "truth", but hard to reach, Alive

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".everlasting, a manifest speech

Yes, to enlighten more clearly that the Qur'an is a revelation and a miracle for the human beings Allah (SWT), the Everlasting Grace, revealed it to one among His servants who was an orphan, a poor shepherd and a desert-rover and an untaught .and unschooled man

That is Allah's grace; He grants it to whom He wills, and Allah is of abounding bounty" " .((۶۲:۴

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About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ۹

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ۲۰۰۷, under the authority of

Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the .cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

encouraging the populace particularly the youth in investigating the religious issues-

replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

providing services for seminary and university researchers-

spreading culture study in the publich-

paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

:Policies

acting according to the legal licenses-

relationship with similar centers-

avoiding parallel working-

merely presenting scientific contents-

mentioning the sources-

.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

:Other activities of the institute

Publication of books, booklets and other editions-

Holding book reading competitions-

Producing virtual, three dimensional exhibitions, panoramas of religious and tourism- places

.Producing animations, computer games and etc-

Launching the website with this address: www.ghaemiyeh.com-

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Launching the system of answering religious, ethical and doctrinal questions-

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Also producing four markets named "Ghaemiyeh Book Market" with Android, IOS,- WINDOWS PHONE and WINDOWS editions

:Appreciation

We would appreciate the centers, institutes, publications, authors and all honorable .friends who contributed their help and data to us to reach the holy goal we follow

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